

GRISWOLD MIDDLE SCHOOL  
ROCKY HILL, CT  
REQUIRED SUMMER READING

**FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 6**

All students entering grade 6 at Griswold Middle School will participate in a required summer reading program. The program has been introduced to all students during their language arts classes. The requirements are as follows:

• **Students entering grade 6 are required to read ONE book chosen from a list of eight provided for each grade level.**

The book lists along with short summaries are included in this document. Lists are also posted in the classrooms, in the school office, and at the public library. All books on the list are available from the following sources:

- The Cora J. Belden Library will have extra copies of each book set aside in a special display. The school library copies will be available through the public library during the summer.
- You should be able to buy or order the books from local books stores or order them online. Many are available as e-books.

Teachers are planning activities to help the students meet the summer reading requirements:

- Teachers will preview each of the books on the list with their students in order to help students with their choices.
- Students will be encouraged to take notes while reading. The teachers will provide instruction on how to use the required organizers. The note-taking organizers are part of this document and should be printed for student use.

During the first week of school in the fall, students will complete writing assignments in Language Arts class:

- Each student in grade 6 will be given a writing assignment based on the book he or she has read.
- Students may not use their books, but may use their notes during the writing assignment. **Only the student's handwritten notes on the note-taking organizer will be allowed. No type-written notes or extra sheets will be permitted.** The writing assignment will be done in class.
- The assignments will be graded by the Language Arts teachers and will count as a grade for the first marking period.

Parents who have questions may call their child's teacher or the Middle School, at 258-7741.



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**FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 6**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Students entering grade 6 must choose ONE book from the following list. Several copies of each book are available at the Cora J. Belden Library. You should also be able to buy or order these books from local bookstores or order them online. Some are available as e-books.

These books are listed in approximate order of difficulty, with the least difficult book listed first. The selections represent a range of interests, levels, and cultures. Students should make their choices based on their interests and abilities.

A note-taking organizer is at the end of this document and may be printed. Students are encouraged to use the organizer as they read to record the important elements of the book. **Only this organizer may be used during the writing assignment to be given in September. Type-written notes or other extra sheets will not be allowed.**

**GRADE 6 SELECTIONS**

*Flying Solo*, by Ralph Fletcher

Imagine that you arrive in your classroom one Friday morning to find that your teacher is absent and that there is no substitute! That's what happens to a class of sixth graders in this story. They decide not to report that they are alone and to run the class by themselves. Can they do it without anyone finding out, and without something terrible happening? The story takes you through their day, hour by hour, as they find out that "flying solo" is not as easy as they thought it would be.

*Under the Blood Red Sun*, by Graham Salisbury

Billy and Tomi, a Japanese-American, are best friends. They are typical thirteen-year-old boys living in Honolulu, Hawaii, in December, 1941. There is a war going on in Europe, but they are more interested in baseball. Then, suddenly, their lives are changed forever when Japanese war planes bomb Pearl Harbor. They struggle to maintain their friendship despite the prejudices of others who view all those of Japanese descent as the enemy.

*Amalee*, by Dar Williams

The year Amalee starts sixth grade, her world begins to fall apart. She lives alone with her dad and when he gets seriously ill, his friends step in to help. Amalee is not sure what is going on and no one will tell her anything. What's worse, no one at school wants to be friends with her. The other students all think she's mean and her favorite teacher is mad at her. Her life seems to be falling apart and there's nothing she can do about it.

*Riding Freedom*, by Pam Munoz Ryan

This is the fictionalized biography of Charlotte Parkhurst, known as Charley, who spent most of her life disguised as a man in the mid-1800's. Charley ran away from an orphanage at a young age, dressed as a boy, and set out to California to pursue her dream of driving a stagecoach. She does it so well that she is offered a job during the California Gold Rush, where she endures many hardships to live a life of adventure.

*Schooled*, by Gordon Korman

Thirteen-year-old Cap has always been homeschooled by his grandmother. He has lived his whole life on her isolated farm. When she becomes ill, Cap is taken in by a social worker and sent to a middle school. Cap is smart and capable, but does not fit in. When he becomes a target for the pranks of bullies and other students, he reacts in unexpected ways.

*Esperanza Rising*, by Pam Munoz Ryan                      Pura Belpre Award

Esperanza believed her wonderful life on her family's ranch in Mexico would last forever. She had a beautiful home, fancy clothes, and a house full of servants. Suddenly, tragedy strikes and Esperanza and her mother must flee to California to live in a camp for Mexican farm workers. Esperanza must now work hard and deal with financial hardship and her mother's illness. Finding a way to rise above these difficult circumstances is crucial to saving herself and her mother.

*Rules*, by Cynthia Lord

Twelve-year-old Catherine has conflicting feelings about her younger brother, David, who is autistic. While she loves him, she is embarrassed by his behavior and feels neglected by their parents. To help David understand how to behave appropriately, she creates "rules" for him. When she meets two new friends, Catherine begins to learn that rules are less important than acceptance of others. This is a sensitive story, told with humor and tenderness, about being different, feeling different, and finding acceptance.

*Mr. Tucket*, by Gary Paulsen

Francis Tucket, a fourteen-year-old boy who is heading west with his family by wagon train on the Oregon Trail, is abducted by Pawnee Indians. Mr. Grimes, a one-armed trapper who trades with the Indians, helps Francis to escape. Mr. Grimes teaches Francis the ways of a trapper while they await the right wagon train to take Francis to his family. Francis is impressed with Mr. Grimes and his way of life, which is full of wild horses, hostile Indians, and a love and respect for the wilderness. As a result, Francis is tempted to stay with his new friend and enjoy his adventurous life style. His experiences with the Indians and with Mr. Grimes, and the conflict he faces inside himself, all help Francis to become the man who will be called Mr. Tucket.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Download and print this organizer (both pages) and use it to record important information about the book you are reading to meet the requirements for the summer reading program. You may use only this organizer in September when you respond to a writing prompt about this book. No other sheets will be allowed.

I. Title \_\_\_\_\_

II. Author \_\_\_\_\_

III. Setting (a description of the time period and location)

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IV. Main Characters (Names and descriptions)

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V. Plot Summary (Problem or situation, important events, outcome)

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